



# Sexually Transmitted Infections: A Continuing Problem

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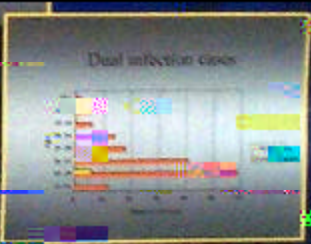
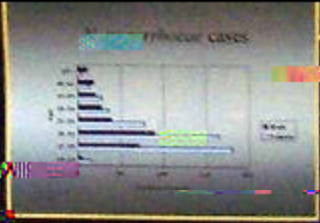
**'Sexually transmitted diseases are a continuing problem among the young ... More public education and surveillance are needed to prevent transmission of these infections.'**

## Introduction

Sexually transmitted diseases continue to be an important public health problem throughout the world. In the United States, Chlamydia trachomatis and gonorrhea represent the most common bacterial causes of sexually transmitted diseases. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that 10 million cases of gonorrhea and 4 million chlamydia infections occur in the U.S. each year. The estimated annual cost of these infections and the problems they cause is over \$1 billion a year.

## Methods

Detection of *C. trachomatis* and *N. gonorrhoeae* from genital specimens was done using a nucleic acid hybridization technique (AVIDIN-FITC-TWO). Patients who were listed in registries from period 1997 through December 2000, were obtained from the computer records of the clinical laboratory and were grouped according to age.



## Results

100% (100%) of the 10,000 tests for *C. trachomatis* were positive. Of the positive results 50% (50%) were from female patients and the highest rates were seen in women 15 to 24 years. Positive tests for *N. gonorrhoeae* were found in 50% (50%) of the 10000 tests performed. Of the positive results 50% (50%) were from female patients and 50% (50%) were from male patients. Dial infections were found in 10% (10%) of the 10,000 tests.

## Conclusion

The data indicate that sexually transmitted diseases are a continuing problem, particularly among young (15-24 years), sexually active individuals and is associated with higher infection rates. The lack of diagnosis, timely and accurate data systems is a considerable burden on the health care system. We suggest that more public education and surveillance be made to prevent transmission of these infections.